

Buying Is Your Business

By FLORENCE S. GRABAN

CONSUMER BUYING is Canada's largest business, and women control and direct it. This buying power amounted to 16 billion dollars during 1955 which is two-thirds of the total national spending. Women should realize that no successful business, even in the million dollar range, would think of operating without planning and providing for the most highly skilled staff and organization. Every important group in Canada, such as labor, business and agriculture, is organized. The consumer, however, which represents many groups is not fully organized.

Canadian women today hold in their keeping great economic power, which they have scarcely begun to evaluate, nor do they realize the strength and power they can wield in the economic life of the nation. As responsible women who have the interest of Canada at heart, we need to learn through working together how we can harness this power and use it most effectively for the good of all our Canadian citizens in the home, the community and the nation.

The Canadian Association of Consumers was created in 1947 by Canada's leading national women's organizations for the purpose of representing the consumer. The Association informs consumers of what they should know for their protection for wise and economic buying and discusses with Government officials matters relating to appropriate legislation. It also advises manufacturers regarding consumer opinion with respect to their particular product. We try in every manner possible to help consumers save and stretch dollars and to improve the standard and quality of the merchandise they purchase.

The Association has worked towards the enactment of legislation in respect to banning price-fixing and resale price maintenance. As a result the consumer can shop around and obtain the benefit of variation in prices and thereby effect saving. The Association was chiefly responsible for the passing of the Canadian Trade Mark (C.S.) and True Labeling Bill. A law was also enacted that makes it compulsory to print and specify the weight content of soaps and detergents when packed. A Government regulation was also put into force banning the use of red striped wrappers on bacon. We have presented briefs to Government agencies dealing with the tariff on textiles and potatoes, and briefs relating to monopolies, patents, trade marks, industrial design, and marketing boards.

A brief on the problem of surplus butter was recently presented to the Prime Minister. The Association is greatly concerned with this problem which is of firm importance to the dairy farmer, and desires to see that this im-

portant industry continues in a healthy state economically. It has suggested to the appropriate authorities methods that could be taken to relieve the mounting surplus. It is expected that a number of these suggestions will be put into effect.

Provincial Branches of the Association have helped with the disposal of various surplus crops such as onions, potatoes, cheese, honey and apples. Such branches are pressing for consumer representation on various marketing boards in order to assist in dealing with these rural problems.

There have been other accomplishments achieved in your interest such as the following: standard sizes for children's clothing which, after three years' co-operative work with Government representatives and manufacturers, will soon be appearing on the market. This involves a whole new form of sizing and body measurements and will effect savings and may eliminate many headaches to mothers, storekeepers and clerks. Tests will be made and checked during the coming summer before a complete change in measurements takes place.

Basic foods such as bread and milk have received serious study and many recommendations put forth by the Association have been adopted. These foods and others such as enriched bread and vitaminized apple juice are bringing great benefits in improving the health of our people. "Vitaminized apple juice," is back on the store shelves after being absent since the last war. The Association has worked hard to get this important and necessary vitamin re-instated. It can be substituted for citrus juice and will be an aid towards using one of our very fine products, apples. The compulsory pasteurization of milk is a goal and objective that all Provincial C.A.C. Branches are working towards. Ontario has this protection and related legislation. Space does not permit further discussion on all matters that have been achieved and that are still in process of accomplishment on behalf of consumers.

Women generate "economic-buying power" every time they make a purchase. It is the demands and desires of women that keep the wheels turning, but at times there must be an evaluation of purchases as they are not always in the best interest of economy. Statistics show that during some years more money has been spent on jewelry than on education. Join the C.A.C. and become the informed disciplined consumer that can make Canada a pattern for other nations in building a new world. Every individual has power and influence, but in unity there is strength, there-